

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: John Redd Smith Elementary School

Other names/site number: VDHR ID 333-5002

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 40 School Drive

City or town: Collinsville State: VA County: Henry

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>Title :</p>	<p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Mid-20th Century Modern

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, CONCRETE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The John Redd Smith School is a mid-century modern school facility, designed by the Martinsville based architect J. Coates Carter, located in Colinsville, Virginia. The 4.8-acre property is located to the east of Virginia Avenue (Route 220) – Colinsville’s major commercial thoroughfare – and accessed along School Drive. The parcel slopes gently upward away from Virginia Avenue and is mostly open with few trees. There are several driveways, asphalt parking lots, a playground, and a sports field to the rear of the school. The school facility is the only building on the property. The central, L-shaped portion of the school was completed in 1952, with both the front and rear additions being added in 1961 and connected to the main school by covered, open breezeways. The facility contained 22 classrooms, a library, a gymnasium with performance stage, a cafeteria, and attached kitchen. Being originally constructed as a school facility for the Henry County school district, it remained used as such until its closure in 2018. Henry County still owns the building, and it has been protected by the locality since its closure. Many of the interior finishes, wall tiles, doors, and windows are original, and the building as whole remains in remarkably good condition, retaining much historic integrity.

Narrative Description

The Context & Landscape

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The John Redd Smith School building currently stands on 4.8 acres located at 40 School Drive – connecting to Virginia Avenue (Route 220) and Oakland Drive. The building faces Virginia Avenue, to the west, though it is set back and slightly elevated. Today the site is mostly surrounded by suburban commercial development including a gas station and convenience store in front of the school and a large parking lot and shopping center to the south. To the east and rear of the school is Colinsville Primary (now the Center for Community Learning), built 15 years after the John Redd Smith School to accommodate a growing student population. Over their many decades of operation, the two facilities often operated in tandem, educating upper or lower elementary school children as necessary. Despite their proximity, Colinsville Primary is not directly visible from the John Redd Smith facility. A low single-story structure, Colinsville is separated from the John Redd Smith facility by 500 feet of landscape and topography. As a result, the two facilities appear functionally separate with the John Redd Smith School integrated into the commercial corridor along Virginia Avenue.

The boundaries of the John Redd Smith site are formed by School Drive to the north, the Colinsville Primary property to the east, and privately owned commercial properties to the west and south. The school is immediately adjacent to the commercial properties with little to no landscaping or buffering between them. Indeed, the property as a whole contains few trees, with the most significant plantings located between the John Redd Smith and Colinsville parcels. The front of the school property accommodates a small visitor parking lot, concrete walkways, and a few small landscape plantings. This is the primary façade and entrance to school, accessing the second floor of the facility. The rear of the school contains driveway and vehicular access for student pick-up and drop-off, service access, parking, a softball/baseball field, a basketball court, and a playground. The property slopes downward to the rear such that the outdoor sports and recreation facilities are accessed by the lowest level of the school.

The School Building

Though the surrounding context of the John Redd Smith school has certainly changed since the facility was constructed in 1952, the building itself remains remarkably intact. Of brick and concrete block construction, the central portion of the building is arranged in an L-shape with the gymnasium comprising the shorter portion of the L (measuring approximately 110 x 65 feet) and a wide, linear corridor flanked by classrooms on both sides comprising the longer portion of the L (measuring approximately 182 x 58 feet). The building contains three floors: two and a half are above grade, with the below grade portion on a walk-out level to the rear of the building. The building also contains two single-story annexes, built in 1961. The annexes contain additional classrooms and office space. The front annex is accessed by an open-air breezeway at the southern end of the front façade. It measures approximately 60 x 70 feet. The school is built into the topography such that it is at grade with the ground floor level of the main building. The rear annex is accessed by an open-air breezeway to the rear of the gym on the second floor of the main building. It measures approximately 80 x 60 feet.

The structure is of masonry construction (brick and concrete block) on both the exterior and interior. The foundation of the building is constructed of continuous masonry units (CMU). The interior load bearing walls are also CMU. The floors and roof skeletal structure is constructed of steel frame, supporting poured concrete on each level, and membrane flat roof material. The front entrance porch is a flat roof structure with membrane covering, supported by running bond

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course brick columns. Except for the ground floor, finished in flat concrete, the exterior walls are running bond course brick. There is one chimney, located on the rear of the building, that uses the same brick construction method. The annexes use the same construction methods and exterior brick cladding.

Most fenestration throughout the building is the original steel framed, 12 or 8-single pane glass, operable single action, tilt hinged windows. Along the main facades of the building, the windows are either single or double-wide, giving the exterior of the building a patterned, modular effect. Large, square glass block grouted windows are used in the stairwells. In many ways, the pattern of windows and the use of glass block is the only ornamentation or detail given to the otherwise rectilinear and utilitarian building.

Typical of midcentury modern schools, circulation through the building is via a wide, central hallway with classrooms accessed on each side. A small vestibule at the front entrance feeds directly into the hallway. The hallway makes use of natural light through the installation of large 12-pane windows along the southern façade. Additional natural light comes into the hallway through the transoms over each classroom door. The corridor connects stairwells on the northeast and southwest corners of the building as well as the gym and front entrance at the northern end of the second-floor hallway.

Many of the original interior finishes remain intact. Most notably are the courses of one-inch thick terracotta tile that line the lower portion of the walls in the central hallways, stairwells, and gym. The original rectangular tiles are a warm yellow-tan. Chosen for durability, the color also imbues a calm, neutral tone to the interior spaces. The hallways use a combination of terrazzo and nine-inch tile floors, some of which is original. Flooring in the classrooms is of varying types, having been repaired and replaced through the years. With the exception of the gymnasium, ceilings throughout most of the building are acoustical drop-ceiling tiles. The stairwells use slate treads, metal railings, and the same terracotta tiles as the central hallway. All electrical lighting has been replaced with fluorescent light fixtures of varied styles.

Each of the 22 classrooms is accessed by the original, solid wood nine-light door with multi-pane transom light windows. The exterior wall of each classroom is taken up by several groupings of the large 12-pane windows, providing an exceptional amount of natural light in the classroom. Though the original chalk boards have been removed and replaced with white boards, several of the classrooms retained the original, built in cupboard style cabinetry with period metal hardware closures, and 10-light glass doors. The closets contain custom made original shelving.

The gymnasium comprises the northern wing of the school. The space is spanned by full width bar trusses and is also naturally lit by seven large, steel frame single pane, seven-light windows. The gym contains a hardwood basketball court and an elevated performance stage with maple flooring. Though repaired and refinished over the years, much of the floor material is believed to be original. The same terracotta tile used in the circulation spaces of the school, line the lower portion of the gym walls.

On the lower level of the school is the cafeteria, kitchen, and associated storage areas. The cafeteria space takes up the width of the building and is interrupted by multiple support columns supporting the poured concrete floors above. Natural light is provided by the same 12-pane

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windows used throughout the building. A large, poured concrete window well was installed, below-grade, to provide the depth necessary to accommodate these large windows.

Heating is provided by two-gas fired boilers and pumps that circulate steam to radiators inside each classroom and corridor. The building was not designed with air-conditioning. As a result, at some point during its decades of operation, window air conditioning units were installed in at least one of each of the classroom windows.

Overall, the John Redd Smith School retains a high level of historic integrity. While the context outside the school grounds has changed since 1952, the immediate setting, e.g., building and grounds, have changed little. The exterior building form and primary interior spaces of both the 1952 building and 1961 annexes remain much as they did at the time of construction. No major remodeling or additions changed the building massing, form, or circulation as originally designed. Perhaps more importantly, many windows, doors, and key finish materials are original. These features are integral to the midcentury modern character of the building. Despite over 60 years of use, evolving methods of teaching, and a changing community, the John Redd Smith School building still evokes a distinct moment in time in the history of Henry County.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.) N/A

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1951- 1970

Significant Dates

1952

1961

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Carter, J. Coates, architect

C. M. Weber Construction Co.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

At the time the John Redd Smith School was constructed, the region was experiencing an unprecedented era of growth and prosperity. With the return of young men from World War II, the already substantial furniture and textile industry of Martinsville and Henry County grew along with the birth rate and population. Furthermore, the equalization effort to demonstrate that “separate but equal” schools were constitutional resulted in significant investment in schools for both white and African American students. The John Redd Smith School was one of at least five new public schools built in Henry County between 1950 and 1952 to accommodate a booming population. What makes the John Redd Smith School notable is that it was one of the first elementary school facilities in the region built in the mid-century modern style and is today among the best preserved. The building’s style embodies the progressive ideas and theories regarding education in post-war America. Rather than formal architectural statements, post-war school buildings were designed as practical, economical, and mass-produced solutions.¹ This is seen in the building massing, circulation, and materials of the John Redd Smith School. The building’s architectural style belongs to part of a nationwide phenomenon, but it was a local project. Paid for with local bonds and taxes; designed by a local architect, J. Coates Carter, who designed several other civic and education facilities in the region; and named for Henry County native and community leader, John Redd Smith, the building is a touchstone for the community – representing a distinct era of prosperity in the region and over six decades of education and civic life for Henry County residents.

The John Redd Smith School is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Education for the significant social, civic, and educational role the school played in the community during the period of significance. It is also architecturally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a well-preserved, locally distinct example of a mid-century modern school facility. Its period of significance begins with its construction in 1952 and ends with county schools’ racial integration in 1970.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Acknowledgements

The completion of this nomination relied heavily on local knowledge and expertise. In particular, the staff of the Henry County Planning Department, Lee H. Clark and Cindy F. Adams and local historian, Fran Snead, at the Bassett Historical Center. They each provided invaluable resources and guidance in telling the story of the John Redd Smith School.

Historic Background

¹ Ogata, Amy F. “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools”, 563.

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Henry County, then named Patrick Henry County, was established in 1777 when it was carved from Pittsylvania County in honor of Patrick Henry, First Governor of Virginia. Several boundary adjustments created the County as it is shaped today and in 1790 it was renamed to Henry County. Henry County was and still is divided into six magisterial districts, one of which is Collinsville. Collinsville remains one of the largest unincorporated towns in Virginia. Notable early settlers include Brigadier General Joseph Martin, for whom Martinsville is named; Colonel George Waller; Captain George Hairston; and Major John Redd, predecessor of John Redd Smith, for whom the John Redd Smith school was named.²

Throughout the 1800s, Henry County's major economic driver was the cultivation of tobacco. By the early 20th century, industry had supplanted farming and the region grew and prospered. By the 1940s business enterprises in the region had grown to include Fieldcrest Towel Mill, Pannill Knitting Company, Bassett Furniture Company, Stanley Furniture Company, Hooker Furniture Company and E.I. Dupont de Nemours – which employed nearly 4,600 people alone.³ The availability of jobs combined with the post-World War II baby boom created a massive influx in the population of the county. In 1940, the population of Henry County was 26,481. By 1950, the population had increased to 31,188 and by 1960 the county population was nearly 52% larger than before the war, with many of those people under 18.⁴ By 1950, it was clear that with the success of the furniture and textile industries and a growing school age population, Henry County would need more schools.

Though Henry County had been operating a public school system for white pupils since 1848⁵, when the Virginia Legislature gave them the power to levy taxes for that purpose, taxation for schools met with opposition and education in the county looked much like the rest of the state - decentralized and unsystematic.⁶ After the 1869 Virginia Constitution established a statewide public school system, more schools began to appear. Notably, The Ruffner Institute, considered the first public graded school in the area, opened in Martinsville in 1887. The school taught both elementary and high school subjects to the area's white students. By 1901, there were 75 white and 32 African American schools in the region, with approximately 2,548 pupils. These schools operated on different schedules, often for no more than five months out of the year, and many charged tuition.⁷ Not until the early 20th century, with industrial growth and progressive social reforms sweeping the state did school systems become more centralized and uniform. While reforms aimed to improve school conditions and access, in the Jim Crow south, it did so unequally. Improvements to African American schools were minimal or relied on support from philanthropists such as Julius Rosenwald. This disparity can be seen in two schools built the same year in Henry County - the 1920 Fieldale Elementary for white children was a brick colonial revival structure, while the 1920 Carver Lane School for African American children was a small, vernacular frame structure. Court ordered school equalization of the 1940s and 50s led

²Hill, Judith Parks America. A History of Henry County, Virginia.

³ Ross, Pat and Fran Snead. History Corner. bassetthistoricalcenter.com

⁴1940, 1950, and 1960 Census Records <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial>

⁵ King, Virginia. "Looking Back on Southside: What was education like in early Henry County?" *Martinsville Bulletin*. April 23, 2018.

⁶ <https://www.virginiahistory.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/education-virginia>

⁷ King, Virginia. "Looking Back on Southside: What was education like in early Henry County?" *Martinsville Bulletin*. April 23, 2018.

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to substantial improvements to school facilities for the county's African American students. African American schools constructed during this time included: G. W. Carter High School (1950), Richard H. Clarke Elementary (1950), Samuel H. Hairston Elementary (c.1950), and Mary Hunter Elementary (1956) among others.

The push for school equalization, the post-war baby boom, and the unprecedented industrial growth of the region combined to create one of the busiest school building eras in the history of Henry County. At least 15 schools were built or remodeled during the 20-year span between 1947 and 1967.⁸ The John Redd Smith School was one of these schools – built to serve elementary age white students of Colinsville.

John Redd Smith School

In 1951, Henry County hired Martinsville based architect J. Coates Carter to design and C. M. Weber to build the new John Redd Smith School. Trained at the University of Virginia and Carnegie Tech⁹, Carter designed many civic and educational institutions throughout the region. In addition to the John Redd Smith School, a few of his known works include the Bassett Public Library (now the Basset History Center), a dormitory and classroom building at Stratford College (now a nursing facility), the G.W. Carter High School, and the Richard H. Clarke Elementary school. Carter's designs for the G.W. Carter High (1950), Richard H. Clarke Elementary (1950), and John Redd Smith Elementary (1952) schools were all executed in the mid-century modern style, reflecting progressive educational theories popular at the time. Before the construction of these schools, the architectural language of public schools in Henry County was relegated to the classical revival styles seen in Basset High School (1947), Campbell Court Elementary (1937) and Fieldale Elementary (1920, remodeled 1941, 1953).

The mid-century modern style has its architectural roots in the Bauhaus movement, focusing on simplified forms, functionality, and mass-production. Driven by the urgent need to construct schools to accommodate growing student populations, as well as reflecting new educational theories, the modern post-war school building was a practical, unadorned space meant to provide a standardized educational experience for all students. These schools utilized plate glass, steel framing, and relatively low-rise massing to create buildings that were easy and inexpensive to construct, maintain, illuminate, and use.¹⁰ The efficiencies and cost-savings can't be denied, but the style was also meant to be accessible. Modern, post-war school buildings were not monumental or imposing, rather approachable and functional. Educational theory at the time rebuked the rigid, top-down form of instruction in favor of more informal student-centered education. Of particular focus were the learning spaces created for elementary age children. Educational theorists and designers believed that the well-lit, informal spaces of midcentury modern school buildings more closely reflected home environments and were better for the psychological development of younger children.¹¹ Interestingly Henry County first approved this novel style of school construction for the two African American schools built in 1950 – G.W. Carter High School and Richard H. Clarke Elementary. Whether administrators were motivated

⁸ Henry County School Board Minutes. February 6, 1951.

⁹ "J. Coates Carter Dies at age 66." *Danville Register*. March 2, 1971.

¹⁰ Ogata, Amy F. "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools", 563.

¹¹ Ogata, Amy F. "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools", 567.

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by theory or economics can only be conjecture, but they soon followed with construction of the John Redd Smith Elementary and the Drewry Mason High Schools in 1952, after which most new construction, additions, or remodels of school properties adopted this new architectural language.

The building form and materials of the John Redd Smith School clearly reflect midcentury modern architectural styles and American post-war school design theory. The John Redd Smith building made use of structural materials such as steel framing and CMUs – made ubiquitous as a result of government supported war industries – which allowed the building to achieve wide interior spaces such as the gymnasium and large expanses of windows for bright, well-lit classrooms. John Redd Smith’s large 12-pane steel framed windows not only functionally illuminated each classroom, but gave the flat, rectilinear exterior of the building a systematic rhythm reflective of modern industrial production. While some may argue that the industrialized aesthetic of the building is off-putting, it was meant to reflect a normative experience rather than an exceptional one – education is available for everyone. Additionally, rather than a large, monumental entrance, which might make young children feel small, the entrance to the John Redd Smith school is under a low, flat porch, which brings the building down to the child’s level. Even the interior finishes of the school reflect a regularity and accessibility in design. The terracotta tiles lining circulation spaces and the gymnasium walls, are not only a warm, neutral tone, but are installed only on the lower portion of the wall. While there is certainly an element of efficiency and economy in not tiling the entire wall, the effect also brings the building down to the child’s level. In the John Redd Smith School, style and theory combined to create a modern, efficient, and economical school with functional, yet child-friendly spaces.

Another tenant of modern post-war school construction was flexibility. The steel frame construction, large blocks of windows, and simplified forms meant schools could not only be constructed quickly, but also easily expanded and modified to meet future needs.¹² In 1961, two single story annexes, built by local contractor Stanley H. Clarke, were added to the John Redd Smith School. Accessed via open air breezeways, the annexes had little impact on the original 1952 structure. With the exception of mechanical and systems upgrades, the 1961 additions have been the only significant change to the 1952 school as originally designed. While other county schools of the same era were remodeled or changed significantly to meet the needs of school consolidations and reassignments (Richard H. Clarke Elementary was decommissioned after integration and is now used by a religious institution, G.W. Carter and Drewry Mason High School went through several grade-level reassignments and consolidations and are now used as elementary schools), the John Redd Smith School survived with much of its historic fabric intact. The condition of the building structure and interior finishes - despite decades of use - speaks to the success of designers who chose sturdy, easy to maintain materials.

The design aesthetic of the building reflects a moment in time, but the building was used continuously by the county for over 60 years, making it iconic within the community. As with most schools, the building was named in honor of a prominent community member - in this case John Redd Smith. A Henry County native, born May 19, 1872, Smith attended the Ruffner Institute in Martinsville, and received a law degree from Washington and Lee University. In

¹² Ogata, Amy F. “Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools”, 568.

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1897 he was elected Commonwealth's Attorney of Henry County and served several consecutive terms. Smith was a well-respected steward of the community, known to strongly support efforts to better education. In fact, Smith offered land for the construction of the school, though County Administrators ultimately declined his offer and chose the school's present location.¹³

Nonetheless, at its meeting on February 6, 1951, the Henry County School Board voted unanimously to name the new \$340,000 school after John Redd Smith. It was stated in the minutes, that Mr. Smith was an old resident of the County, "having taken a wholesome interest in its people for a long time and having played some part in the development of Collinsville."¹⁴

Even though Smith did not live to see it, the John Redd Smith School opened for the 1952 school year with an enrollment of 586 students in 14 classes under the direction of Mr. E. M. Dickerson.¹⁵ John Redd Smith students attended grades one through seven in the building until Collinsville Primary opened in 1967. Collinsville housed grade levels one through three and John Redd Smith Elementary kept grade levels four through seven. This later changed in 2004 when grades pre-k through two attended Collinsville Primary and grades three through five attended John Redd Smith. At that time, Fieldale Collinsville High School became a Middle School and educated grades six through eight. May 25, 2018 was the last day of school at both Collinsville and John Redd Smith. The larger Meadow View Elementary, built just a few miles away, now educates all elementary grade levels in the Collinsville district. Collinsville Primary was converted to the Center for Community Learning, and John Redd Smith remains vacant.

Throughout its 66 years of operation, the John Redd Smith School saw thousands of children walk its halls; hundreds of teachers and administrators counsel and guide those students; and innumerable sports games and tournaments, dances and social events, and club and fraternal meetings. Rarely a week went by that the *Martinsville Bulletin* did not announce an event or meeting to be held at John Redd Smith School. The seventh-grade prom was held there almost annually and in 1959, being one of the newest and largest gymnasiums in the area, John Redd Smith hosted the County Championship basketball tournament.¹⁶

While the school's name honors one community leader, hundreds of other leaders, teachers, and administrators passed through its halls daily. Mr. Curtis Wall was a favorite principal for 20 years at John Redd Smith Elementary. He began his career there in 1961 after being an Administrator at Sanville Elementary in Bassett. Wall counseled thousands of students over the years and admitted to being pleased years after his retirement, that his grown students still called him "Mr. Wall".¹⁷ When the school closed in 2018, Mary Hall and her sister Amy Elliott, who both attended John Redd Smith, had been teaching there for 23 and 14 years, respectively.¹⁸ They are among several locals who attended school in the county and grew up to teach at John Redd Smith. Frances Spencer, another local resident and a gifted resource teacher for the county,

¹³ Ross, Pat and Fran Snead. *History Corner*. bassetthistoricalcenter.com

¹⁴ Henry County School Records. February 1951.

¹⁵ Ross, Pat and Fran Snead. *History Corner*. bassetthistoricalcenter.com

¹⁶ "Grade Schools to Vie for Title". *Martinsville Bulletin*. Thursday, March 5, 1959.

¹⁷ Ross, Pat and Fran Snead. *History Corner*. bassetthistoricalcenter.com

¹⁸ "Saying Goodbye: Former students, teachers remember John Redd Smith and Collinsville Primary". *Martinsville Bulletin* April 11, 2018

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had a memorial bench placed at the school in her honor after she died suddenly in 2008.¹⁹ Countless other teachers and administrators passed through the halls over the school's lifespan and John Redd Smith Elementary remains an integral part of their legacy. Today, the teachers and students of John Redd Smith may be gone, but the building's history in the community will resonate for many years to come.

The physical structure of the John Redd Smith School as one of the first elementary schools in Henry County built in the midcentury modern style and today one of the best preserved makes it an architecturally significant building worth preserving. But the building also represents over six decades of community life in Henry County. Continuously used as an elementary school and community gathering place, the building is a place of memory for countless residents and an iconic community facility.

¹⁹ "Remembering Frances: Memorial from John Redd Smith Elementary goes home". *Martinsville Bulletin*. July 14, 2018

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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US Census Archives. Census.gov.

Virginia Department of Historic Resources Database. dhr.virginia.gov/v-cris/.

John Redd Smith Elementary School
Name of Property

Henry County, Virginia
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond; Henry County, Virginia Archive of Public Records

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR 044-5911

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.8

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: N36.718455 | Longitude: W79.910373 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

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Name of Property

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- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary coincides with the surveyed boundaries as set forth in the current attached plat map completed by Bryan Jones Surveying, P.C. dated February 10, 2020. The historic boundary excludes portions of the platted parcel located north of School Drive that are without any associated historic resources. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Tax Parcel Map and Plat Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses all parts of the school property as it existed during the period of significance as well as the historic setting and all associated historic resources.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Lee H. Clark, AICP/Catherine H. Redfearn

organization: Henry County Planning and Zoning Department/Partners for Place

street & number: 3300 Kings Mountain Road

city or town: Collinsville state: VA zip code: 24112

e-mail: Leeclark@co.henry.va.us/catherine@partnersforplace.com

telephone: 276-634-4620/434-906-7980

date: 1/10/2021

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer,

John Redd Smith Elementary School
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Henry County, Virginia
County and State

photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log 1 of 2

Name of Property: John Redd Smith Elementary School

City or Vicinity: Collinsville

County: Henry State: Virginia

Photographer: Lee Clark

Date Photographed: 04/29/20 and 05/04/20

1. John Redd Smith School, Rear Façade
Photo 1 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0001
Description: View looking west showing rear façade of 1952 school building and 1961 rear annex.
2. John Redd Smith School, Front Façade
Photo 2 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0002
Description: View looking east showing front façade of 1952 school building
3. John Redd Smith School, SouthFaçade
Photo 3 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0003
Description: View looking north showing south façade of 1952 school building. 1961 front annex, basketball court, and playground.
4. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View
Photo 4 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0004
Description: Aerial view of school, looking southwest.
5. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View
Photo 5 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0005
Description: Aerial view of school, looking northeast.
6. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View
Photo 6 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0006
Description: Aerial view of school, looking southeast.
7. John Redd Smith School, School Entrance & Sign
Photo 7 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0007
Description: View looking east showing school sign and entrance portico.
8. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View
Photo 8 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0008
Description: Aerial view of school, looking southeast, showing relationship to commercial center.
9. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View Front Annex

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- Photo 9 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0009
Description: Aerial view of school, looking south, showing front annex and topography change.
10. John Redd Smith School, Building Footprint
Photo 10 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0010
Description: Aerial view showing building footprint.
11. John Redd Smith School, Aerial View
Photo 11 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0011
Description: Aerial view looking northwest, showing relationship to Virginia Avenue.
12. John Redd Smith School, Entrance Vestibule
Photo 12 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0012
Description: View from front doors, looking toward north stairs, showing modern security doors.
13. John Redd Smith School, Office Door
Photo 13 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0013
Description: Original office door with nine-light window and tripartite transom.
14. John Redd Smith School, Privacy Glass Detail
Photo 14 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0014
Description: Detail of privacy glass window separating workspaces.
15. John Redd Smith School, Second Floor Hall
Photo 15 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0015
Description: View looking down second floor hall to south façade 12-pane window.
16. John Redd Smith School, Gym Doors
Photo 16 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0016
Description: View from second floor hall showing double entry doors to gym with six-part transom.
17. John Redd Smith School, North Stair
Photo 17 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0017
Description: View of north circulation stair from second floor hall.
18. John Redd Smith School, Interior Door Detail
Photo 18 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0018
Description: Detail view of interior door with tripartite transom.
19. John Redd Smith School, Entrance Vestibule
Photo 12 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0012
Description: View from front doors, looking toward north stairs, showing modern security doors.

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20. John Redd Smith School, Gymnasium
Photo 20 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0020
Description: Gymnasium showing basketball floor, exterior door with multi-part transom and upper-level windows.
21. John Redd Smith School, Stage Steps
Photo 21 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0021
Description: Detail of stage steps showing maple floor and original terracotta tile.
22. John Redd Smith School, Gym and Stage
Photo 22 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0022
Description: View of gymnasium stage.
23. John Redd Smith School, Gym Doors
Photo 23 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0023
Description: Detail of exterior gym doors with privacy glass. Doors access front portico.
24. John Redd Smith School, Classroom Cupboard
Photo 24 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0024
Description: Original classroom cupboards and closets.
25. John Redd Smith School, Classroom Door
Photo 25 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0025
Description: View of classroom showing original nine-light door and transom.
26. John Redd Smith School, Classroom Window
Photo 22 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0026
Description: View of original classroom windows showing subsequent A/C window unit installation.
27. John Redd Smith School, Closet Shelves Detail
Photo 27 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0027
Description: Detail view of custom shelving installation.
28. John Redd Smith School, Cupboard Detail
Photo 28 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0028
Description: Detail of cupboard doors.
29. John Redd Smith School, Classroom Window Detail
Photo 29 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0029
Description: Detail view of intact, original 12-pane window.
30. John Redd Smith School, Hallway Tile Detail
Photo 30 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0030
Description: Detail view of terracotta hallway wall tile.

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Name of Property

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31. John Redd Smith School, Hallway Detail
Photo 31 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0031
Description: Detail view of hallway wall tile.
32. John Redd Smith School, Cafeteria
Photo 32 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0032
Description: View of cafeteria showing front façade ground-floor windows.
33. John Redd Smith School, Window Well Detail
Photo 33 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0033
Description: Detail of cafeteria window wells.
34. John Redd Smith School, Front Yard
Photo 34 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0034
Description: View looking north towards entrance portico, showing walkways and front façade of 1952 building.
35. John Redd Smith School, Front Annex Breezeway
Photo 35 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0035
Description: View looking south showing front annex, breezeway and playground in the background.
36. John Redd Smith School, South Stair Window
Photo 36 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0036
Description: View of south stair showing original glass block window.
37. John Redd Smith School, Chimney
Photo 37 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0037
Description: Detail view of chimney on rear façade of building.
38. John Redd Smith School, Library
Photo 38 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0038
Description: School library.
39. John Redd Smith School, Rear Annex
Photo 39 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0039
Description: View looking north showing rear annex and breezeway.
40. John Redd Smith School, Rear Annex Hallway
Photo 40 of 40: VA_HenryCounty_JohnRedd SmithSchool_0040
Description: Central hall of rear annex.

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Photo Log 2 of 2 – Supplemental Exterior Photos

Name of Property: John Redd Smith Elementary School

City or Vicinity: Collinsville

County: Henry State: Virginia

Photographer: Michael J. Pulice (VDHR)

Date Photographed: February 10, 2021

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0001

School exterior, north wing, looking east.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0002

School exterior, north wing, looking east-northeast.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0003

School exterior, principal entrance/canopy, looking east-northeast.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0004

School exterior, north and south wings, looking northeast.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0005

School exterior, north wing, looking north.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0006

School exterior, south wing, looking east-southeast.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0007

School exterior, one-story ancillary, looking southeast.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0008

School exterior, south and rear wings, looking north-northwest.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0009

School exterior, south and rear wings, looking northwest.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0010

School exterior, south and rear wings, looking west-northwest.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0011

School exterior, south and rear wings, looking west.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0012

School exterior, rear wing, looking southwest.

VA_HenryCounty_JohnReddSmithSchool_0013

School exterior, rear and north wings, looking southwest.

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.